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ABSTRACT

The hypotheses tested that (1) anxiety and (2) extraversion (exvia) would be negatively related to career making ability. Variables defined as contributing to anxiety included ego weakness, excitability, low superego strength, threat sensitivity and high ergic tension. Extraversion was considered the "general tendency to social interaction" with people. Career decision making ability was considered directly proportional to the quality of strategy used by the individual while planning the future activities of a ficticious person in the fields of education, job, family, life and leisure. The Junior-Senior High School Personality Questionnaire and the Life Career Game (Boocock, 1968) were used to obtain measures of anxiety and exvia, and career decision making ability respectively. Except for one female subgroup, the hypothesis of negative relationship between anxiety and career decision making ability was not supported; in fact for 3 male subgroups, a significant positive relationship was found. The exvia scores and career decision making ability were not related for any of the subgroups. Possible reasons for non-support of the hypotheses are discussed. (KS)

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PERSONALITY AND CAREER DECISION MAKING [1]

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The relationship between personality and career decision making behavior of an individual has been investigated by many researchers (Bordin, Nachmann, & Segal, 1963; Holland, 1962, 1966a, 1966b; Roe, 1957). Most of these researchers have tended to use broad definition of personality. Although the emphasis on the concept of total personality is helpful in understanding its contribution to career decision behavior; it does not throw enough light on the relationship between various personality traits such as anxiety and career decision making. Some researchers have felt that such relationships need to be looked into more carefully if deeper understanding of the process of career decision is sought. These researchers have designed studies which have examined the relationship of career decision making behavior to personal orientations (Osipow & Ashby, 1968; Osipow, Ashby, & Wall, 1966; Wall, Osipow, & Ashby, 1967), self-esteem (Korman, 1966, 1967, 1969), self-concept (Anderson & Olson, 1965), and manifest anxiety and defensiveness (Weinhold, 1969). As very few studies have been carried out to investigate the nature of relationship between personality traits such as anxiety and extraversion and career decision making, no definite conclusions regarding such relationship are forthcoming to date. The present study was designed

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[1] This paper is based on the data collected by the author in 1970 school year for his doctoral dissertation entitled "The Relationship of Career Decision Making Ability to Personality, Socio-Economic Status, and Vocational Maturity" at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Requests for copies of this paper should be sent to Harry S. Malik, Vocational Psychologist, Saskatchewan Training School, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada.

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to further the understanding of such a relationship. In order to investigate the problem outlined above, the following hypotheses were tested:

Hyp. 1: Anxiety is negatively related to career decision making ability.

Hyp. 2: Extraversion (exvia) is negatively related to career decision making ability.

For the purposes of the present study the description of anxiety given by Cattell and Cattell (1969) was accepted. According to them the major variables contributing to anxiety are ego weakness, excitability, low superego strength, threat sensitivity, guilt proneness, low self-sentiment, and high ergic tension (p.41). The term extraversion was used as similar to exvia which according to Cattell and Cattell (1969) is the "general tendency to social interaction" with people. This definition precludes the inhibitedness to the physical world which is taken into consideration by the broader definition of extraversion. Career decision making ability of an individual was considered directly proportional to the quality of strategy or plan used by the individual while planning the future activities of a fictitious person in the fields of education, job, family life, and leisure.

METHOD

Subjects

The sample consisted of 144 grade nine students from three schools in a suburban community. Out of these 144 students 75 were male and 69 were female.

Instruments Used

The Junior-Senior High School Personality Questionnaire (The HSPQ) prepared by Cattell (1963) and published by the Institute for Personality and

Ability Testing (IPAT), was used for determining anxiety and exvia (extra-version) scores. Form A, which contains 142 items and can be administered in 45-50 minutes, was used. The HSPQ provides scores on 14 personality factors which are further used to calculate an individual's anxiety and exvia scores by using weights and constants given in the Technical Handbook for the HSPQ (Cattell & Cattell, 1969, p. 41).

The Life Career Game by Boocock (1968) was used to obtain career decision making ability scores of the subjects. This is a simulation game which imitates certain features of real life - education, occupation, family, and labor markets. In this game the player is required to make future plans for a fictitious person for a period of eight to ten years. The information about the abilities, interests, home conditions (economic and social), and academic achievements of the individual is provided in a form of a profile. A subject (player) who plans the life of the profile person in a realistic manner, determined by the criteria set up by the developer of the game, ends up with a better score.

Proceedure

The HSPQ Form A was administered to the subjects according to the instructions given in the HSPQ manual. The HSPQ answer sheets were scored with the help of the quick scoring answer key developed by IPAT. Then the raw scores were converted to standard scores (stens) by using the norm tables provided. These sten scores were further used in calculating the anxiety-adjustment and exvia-invia scores for each subject.

The Life Career Game was played according to the instructions and rules provided by the developer of the game. A few minor changes in the format of the forms and the rules of the game were made to make the game more suitable for this investigation. For example, instead of playing in groups of two or three, the subjects played the game individually. For the purpose of this study profiles of

of three fictitious persons (Larry, Bob, and Mary) were used. Larry's profile was used as a practice profile in order to acquaint the subjects with the format of the game. After playing four rounds on Larry's profile, the subjects were assigned randomly to two groups of players. One group planned the future eight years of life for Bob's profile, whereas, the other group played eight rounds for Mary's profile. All the eight rounds of the Life Career Game played by each subject were scored at the end of each round by the subjects and checked by the investigator. The grand total of all the total scores for each of the eight rounds was taken as the career decision making ability score of a subject.

RESULTS

To test the hypotheses, Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the relationship between career decision making ability and the personality traits of anxiety and exvia (extraversion). This was done separately for the group using Bob's profile and the group using Mary's profile. This considered total group, male and female subgroups, and school subgroups for each profile group.

The Pearson product moment correlation coefficients between anxiety and career decision making ability scores are presented in Table I.

It is evident from Table I that in the case of the group with Bob's profile, the relationship between anxiety scores and career decision making ability scores for total female group was significant ($p \leq .05$) and negative as predicted. There was a significant positive relationship between anxiety scores and career decision making ability scores for total male subgroup ($p \leq .01$), school I subgroup ($p \leq .05$), and school 2 subgroup ($p \leq .05$), which was opposite to that expected.

In the case of the group with Mary's profile (Table I), the hypothesis of negative relationship between anxiety scores and career decision making ability scores was not supported for any subgroup.

TABLE I

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN ANXIETY AND CAREER DECISION MAKING ABILITY SCORES BY SEX

GROUP	SEX	N	CORRELATION COEFFICIENT
BOB'S PROFILE			
TOTAL	M	46	0.350**
	F	27	-0.343*
	M & F (Total)	73	0.167
SCHOOL I	M & F (Total)	33	0.346*
SCHOOL 2	M & F (Total)	20	0.422*
SCHOOL 3	M & F (Total)	20	-0.151
MARY'S PROFILE			
TOTAL	M	29	-0.028
	F	42	-0.061
	M & F (Total)	71	-0.011
SCHOOL I	M & F (Total)	24	0.100
SCHOOL 2	M & F (Total)	25	-0.136
SCHOOL 3	M & F (Total)	22	-0.079

* $p \leq .05$ (one-tailed tests)

** $p \leq .01$

Correlation coefficients between exvia scores and career decision making ability scores are summarized in Table 2.

It is evident from Table 2 that the hypothesis of negative relationship between exvia scores and career decision making ability scores was not supported for all the subgroups.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study offer little support for the hypothesized relationships between career decision making ability and personality traits of anxiety and exvia. The results of the present study supported the findings of a recent study (Weinhold, 1969) which also failed to find any relationship between anxiety and vocational problem solving ability. Weinhold (1969) suggested that the lack of support for the hypothesized relationship between two variables may be partly due to the unrefined nature of the instruments such as Life Career Game. Nearly the same line of reasoning may be used to explain the failure of the present study to support the relationship between career decision making ability and personality traits of anxiety and exvia. The decision to use the Life Career Game as an instrument for measurement of the career decision making ability was based on the validity of its contents to measure this ability. This was a novel role assigned to this game and the game may have failed to stand to the expectations of such a role. Some of the features of the game which may have contributed to this failure are given below:

a. Failure of the game to provide a comparable spread of scores on all decision areas. Education and leisure contributed more to the total score as compared to those of job and family life.

b. Failure of the game to provide checks against the tendency of the participants to repeat the same set of scores from round to round, particularly when their profile person got a job.

TABLE 2

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN EXVIA AND
CAREER DECISION MAKING ABILITY BY SEX

GROUP	SEX	N	CORRELATION COEFFICIENT
	BOB'S PROFILE		
TOTAL	M	46	0.063
	F	27	0.093
	M & F (Total)	73	0.063
SCHOOL I	M & F (Total)	33	0.201
SCHOOL 2	M & F (Total)	20	0.309
SCHOOL 3	M & F (Total)	20	-0.348
	MARY'S PROFILE		
TOTAL	M	29	-0.016
	F	42	-0.155
	M & F (Total)	71	-0.086
SCHOOL I	M & F (Total)	24	-0.088
SCHOOL 2	M & F (Total)	25	-0.304
SCHOOL 3	M & F (Total)	22	0.122

* $p \leq .05$ (one-tailed tests)
** $P \leq .01$

c. Disinterest on the part of some participants who suggested that they were forced into playing of the Life Career Game which according to them was long, complicated and boring.

In the end, the scores of the participants may have been affected by their whims and curiosity thus leading to less realistic decisions in some or all decision areas of the game. This could have affected the career decision making ability scores of the player in the end.

Inconclusive nature of the findings of the present study makes the task of appraising their usefulness in the counselling process rather difficult. In the author's view it would be justified to delay such an appraisal until such time when the results from the replication of a study using an improved form of Life Career Game along with one or two other instruments tapping the career decision making ability of the subjects are available.

SUMMARY

Career decision making ability scores of 75 male and 69 female students from three suburban schools were correlated with their anxiety and exvia scores. It was found that there was a significant ($p \leq .05$) negative relationship between career decision making ability scores and anxiety scores for one of the female subgroup. The relationship was positive and significant ($p \leq .05$) for three subgroups. The exvia scores and career decision making ability scores were not related for any of the subgroups. The possible reasons for non-support of the hypothesized relationships were discussed and suggestions to improve the design were presented.

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